



Advanced Post-Operative Manual therapy for the Massage Therapist: Scar Management, Manual Lymphatic Drainage, and Clinical Considerations in Orthopedic, Plastic Surgery, and Medically Complex Patients

Instructed by Carmen Recupero, MBA, LPTA, CMT, CLT-LANA, WCC
Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant and Certified Massage Therapist, Certified Wound Therapist

Registration Deadline: January 16, 2027

- Date:** January 30-31, 2027 (2 days) **Minimum: 8 Participants / Maximum: 30 Participants**
Time: 9:00am-5:30pm AST (45-minute lunch break)
Location: Live, Virtual-Online with Demonstration
Fee: \$475 (ANBMT Member) \$575 (Non-Member)
**If you were to enroll in this course directly through the instructor, the course fee is \$549 USD (Approx. \$750 CAD)*
(PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY REGISTRATION; RESERVATIONS NOT ACCEPTED)
- CEUs:** 15 hours
Day 1 will serve as a comprehensive refresher for participants who completed the **Practical Applications of Lymphatic Drainage course in June 2024.*
**Student members in the final phase of massage therapy training, with foundational anatomy and physiology knowledge, are eligible to enroll in this certification.*

Course Description

This advanced two-day course is designed for licensed massage therapists seeking to safely and effectively work with post-operative clients, including those recovering from orthopedic surgery, plastic and reconstructive surgery, oncology-related procedures, and medically complex conditions.

The course expands upon foundational manual lymphatic drainage principles and introduces post-operative scar massage, tissue remodeling strategies, edema management, fibrosis prevention, and clinical red-flag recognition. Emphasis is placed on clinical reasoning, scope-appropriate intervention, contraindications, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Participants will learn how to adapt manual techniques across surgical timelines, recognize complications requiring medical referral, and modify treatment plans based on surgical type, healing stage, comorbidities, and physician restrictions.

Target Audience & Prerequisites

Target Audience:

- Registered Massage Therapists
- Massage Therapists working in medical, post-surgical, oncology, or rehabilitation-adjacent settings

Advanced Standing: Massage therapists who have previously completed a foundational manual lymphatic drainage course may be eligible for advanced standing. **Day 1** will provide a comprehensive refresher for participants who completed the *Practical Applications of Lymphatic Drainage* course in June 2024. **Day 2** will focus on post-operative applications, scar management, and more complex clinical presentations.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the physiological principles of post-operative edema, inflammation, lymphatic load, and scar formation.
2. Identify normal versus abnormal post-surgical healing responses.
3. Demonstrate safe, scope-appropriate manual lymphatic drainage techniques for post-operative clients.
4. Apply scar massage and tissue-mobilization strategies appropriate to surgical stage and tissue healing.
5. Modify manual techniques for orthopedic, plastic surgery, oncology-related, and medically complex cases.
6. Recognize post-operative complications requiring referral, including infection, seroma, hematoma, DVT risk, and delayed wound healing.
7. Integrate physician guidelines, surgical precautions, and interdisciplinary communication into treatment planning.
8. Establish safe treatment boundaries and documentation practices consistent with massage therapy scope of practice.

Detailed Course Outline

DAY 1 – Foundations & Manual Lymphatic Drainage (7.5 hours)

(Required unless advanced standing is granted)

Section 1: Post-Operative Physiology Overview

- Lymphatic A&P
- Lymphatic Pathology
- Inflammatory cascade and surgical trauma
- Lymphatic load following surgery
- Edema vs. swelling vs. fibrosis
- Surgical timelines and tissue healing phases

Section 2: Manual Lymphatic Drainage Review

- Lymphatic anatomy relevant to post-surgical care
- Indications and contraindications
- Pressure, pacing, and direction of flow
- Proximal clearing concepts

Section 3: Clinical Application of MLD

- Post-orthopedic surgery considerations (joint replacement, arthroscopy)
- Post-plastic surgery considerations (abdominoplasty, liposuction, breast procedures)
- Oncology-related surgical considerations
- Case examples and modifications

DAY 2 – Scar Massage, Complications & Complex Cases (7.5 hours)

Section 4: Scar Formation & Tissue Remodeling

- Types of scars (hypertrophic, adherent, fibrotic)
- Timing of scar intervention
- Tissue behavior under manual load

Plastic Surgery–Specific Content Includes:

- Common procedures encountered by massage therapists:
 - Abdominoplasty (tummy tuck)
 - Liposuction (including fibrosis risk)
 - Breast procedures (augmentation, reduction, reconstruction)
 - Facial and neck cosmetic surgery
- Post- surgery edema patterns and lymphatic load
- Safe timing for manual intervention post-surgery
- Scar maturation and fibrosis prevention strategies
- Compression garments: purpose, precautions, and therapist considerations
- Red flags specific to cosmetic and reconstructive surgery (seroma, hematoma, delayed healing)
- Scope-appropriate communication with surgeons and post-op clinic

Section 5: Scar Massage Techniques

- Superficial and progressive scar mobilization
- Directional loading and tissue glide
- Integrating lymphatic principles into scar work
- What *not* to do: common mistakes and risks

Section 6: Post-Operative Complications

- Seromas, hematomas, infection warning signs
- DVT and vascular red flags
- Nerve irritation and sensory changes
- When to stop treatment and refer

Section 7: Medically Complex Clients

- Diabetes, autoimmune disease, cancer history underlying surgical procedures
- Radiation and surgical tissue considerations
- Medications affecting healing and bruising
- Fatigue, pain, and nervous system considerations

Section 8: Professional Practice & Scope

- Scope of practice boundaries
- Communication with physicians and clinics
- Documentation basics for post-op clients
- Ethical considerations and informed consent

Clinical Scope, Safety & Risk Language

This course does **not** train massage therapists to diagnose medical conditions, alter surgical protocols, or replace medical care. All techniques taught are within the recognized scope of massage therapy and are intended to complement, not substitute for, medical treatment.

Participants are instructed to follow all physician guidelines, recognize contraindications, and refer clients to appropriate healthcare providers when complications are suspected.

Assessment & Completion

Certificate of Completion Requirements:

- Full attendance of registered course day(s)
- Participation in practical demonstrations or lab/practice/homework
- Completion of post-course knowledge check or evaluation

Course Materials

- A comprehensive course manual (PDF) will be provided via email a few days prior to the start of the class for distribution to registered participants, allowing attendees the option to print their own copy if desired or access digitally on a personal device.
- **Certificate of Completion**
A PDF certificate will be emailed to participants within one week of course completion. Certificates will reflect total contact hours completed and note advanced standing, where applicable.

What to Bring

- Wear or bring loose-fitting.
- A mat and blanket (or portable massage table and linens if you prefer).
- Comfortable clothing for the lab portion.
- The course will be conducted through the Zoom platform, ensuring a seamless learning experience.
- Participants can expect to receive comprehensive course details *five days prior to the start date for optimal preparation*.
- Additionally, PDF versions of the course presentation and curated links to supplementary videos will be provided for continued learning.

About the Instructor

Carmen Recupero, MBA, LPTA, CMT, CLT-LANA, is a licensed physical therapist assistant and certified massage therapist with a specialty certification in lymphatic therapy. She currently provides inpatient and outpatient lymphatic therapy to clients with a variety of diagnoses through her practice, Lymphatic Care Specialists, LLC, and teaches Lymphatic Pathology at the Blue Ridge School of Massage in Blacksburg, Virginia.

She holds an MBA from Darden, UVA, Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management from California College of Health Sciences in National City, California, and an Associate of Science in Physical Therapy (Magna Cum Laude) from Jefferson College of Health Sciences in Roanoke, Virginia. She completed a 140-hour certification course in Manual Lymphatic Drainage and Complex Decongestive Physiotherapy through the Upledger Institute and has extensive experience in Foeldii, Chikly, Vodder and Upledger methods. She integrates the techniques in her approach.

Carmen has worked in a variety of health care settings over the last 14 years, both as a clinical therapist and in administration. Carmen has conducted national and international presentations on the prevention and management of lymphedema in cancer patients and on the development of lymphedema programs in acute and outpatient care. To learn more about Monarch Consulting and Education, please visit her website, <https://www.monarchce.com>.

They offer full CLT, Certified Lymphedema Therapist certifications as well as Neurolymphatic and Integrative Oncology certifications and Lipedema courses.



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(Please print clearly)

Name: _____ RMT #: _____

Address: _____

Telephone:(Home) _____ (Work) _____ (Cell) _____

Email: _____

Status: Member Student Member Non-Member

Association _____

Please return the completed registration form by email and submit payment via one of the options below

Method of Payment: Cheque Money order E-transfer Email: anbmt@anbmt.ca

Credit Card ***Please contact the ANBMT anbmt@anbmt.ca to pay by credit card.**

***No refunds will be issued after the registration deadline has passed.**